

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CPR-01 CIAE-00 INR-07
NSAE-00 SS-15 NSC-05 DODE-00 /049 W
-----301929Z 060010 /47

P R 301736Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6993
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 05659

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP, PFOR, SF, GW
SUBJECT: BIO DATA: SOUTH AFRICAN AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE
DONALD BELL SOLE

REFS: (A) STATE 58564; (B) CAPE TOWN 420; (C) CAPE TOWN
449

1. EMBASSY CONCURS IN CAPE TOWN'S EVALUATION OF
AMBASSADOR SOLE. HE IS SEEN HERE AS A VERY PROFESSIONAL
DIPLOMAT. HE HAS DONE A GOOD JOB IN A DIFFICULT SITUA-
TION. ALTHOUGH OBVIOUSLY BRIGHT AND DILIGENT, THE WORD
"SCHOLAR" WOULD NOT HAVE OCCURRED TO US IN DESCRIBING
HIM.

2. WE SUPPORT FULLY CAPE TOWN'S OBSERVATION THAT
SOLE IS AN ACTIVE, RATHER THAN A PASSIVE, DIPLOMAT. HE
HAS, FOR EXAMPLE, PRESIDED OVER THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW
IMPRESSIVE EMBASSY AND RESIDENCE BUILDINGS AND THE
EXPANSION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC PRESENCE
IN BONN TO THE POINT WHERE THE SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY
IN BONN MAY BE ITS LARGEST IN EUROPE.

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3. MORE IMPORTANTLY, HE HAS ACTIVELY PROMOTED GOOD
RELATIONS BETWEEN THE FRG AND SOUTH AFRICA. FOR
EXAMPLE, WHEN SAG FOREIGN MINISTER MULLER WANTED TO
COME TO BONN IN THE FALL OF 1975 TO INAUGURATE SOLE'S
NEW EMBASSY AND TO HOLD A CHIEFS OF MISSION CONFERENCE,
SOLE ARRANGED THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTER WOULD BE

RECEIVED BY FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER AND TREATED
ALMOST AS IF HE HAD AN OFFICIAL INVITATION.

THE FACT THAT MULLER DID NOT HAVE AN INVITA-
TION AND THAT HIS VISIT WAS SOMEWHAT EMBARRASSING TO
THE FRG (WHICH RECEIVED HIM AT SUCH A HIGH LEVEL ONLY
IN ORDER TO AVOID BEING IMPOLITE) WAS LARGELY LOST IN
THE EXCELLENT PROGRAM ARRANGED FOR MULLER BY SOLE.

4. SOLE ARRANGED AN EVEN BETTER PROGRAM FOR PRIME
MINISTER VORSTER AND MULLER WHEN THEY CAME TO GERMANY
TO MEET WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER IN JUNE 1976. THIS
MEETING, WHICH WAS ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED FOR HAMBURG,
WAS MOVED FROM THAT CITY BECAUSE OF POLITICAL AND
SECURITY PROBLEMS IT PRESENTED TO CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT.
IT WAS, OF COURSE, HELD IN A REMOTE TOWN IN SOUTHERN
GERMANY. IN SPITE OF THIS BACKGROUND AND POSSIBLE
DOMESTIC REPERCUSSIONS FOR SCHMIDT, SOLE ARRANGED
MEETINGS WITH BOTH SCHMIDT AND GENSCHER, WHICH RESULTED
IN SATISFACTORY TALKS IN BONN FOR BOTH VORSTER AND
MULLER.

5. SOLE'S ACTIVIST APPROACH TO DIPLOMACY HAS LED TO
HIS STUBBING HIS TOE ON AT LEAST ONE OCCASION,
THE "RALL AFFAIR." DURING
1974 AND 1975 A GERMAN CONSORTIUM WAS COMPETING FOR A

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CPR-01 CIAE-00 INR-07
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 05659

720 MILLION DOLLAR CONTRACT FOR A NUCLEAR POWER STATION AT

KOEBERG, SOUTH AFRICA. THE GERMAN CONSORTIUM WAS FACED WITH NOT ONLY INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION, BUT ALSO STRONG OPPOSITION WITHIN THE FRG AND THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT TO THE DEAL. IN AN EFFORT TO OVERCOME THIS OPPOSITION, SOLE INVITED A HIGH RANKING GERMAN GENERAL (RALL) TO SOUTH AFRICA. IN THE FALL OF 1975 SOLE'S CONFIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENCE ABOUT THIS MATTER WAS PUBLISHED BY A RADICAL ORGANIZATION AFFILIATED WITH BLACK AFRICAN LIBERATION MOVEMENTS. ITS OPERATION WAS SO PROFESSIONAL THAT THERE WAS SPECULATION THAT THE ORGANIZATION WAS SUPPORTED BY EAST GERMAN INTELLIGENCE. IN HIS CONFIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENCE, SOLE CLAIMED THAT DEFENSE MINISTER LEBER HAD APPROVED GENERAL RALL'S TRIP. THIS REVELATION WAS EXTREMELY EMBARRASSING TO BOTH SOLE AND LEBER SINCE LEBER HAD CLAIMED PUBLICLY THE WEEK BEFORE THAT HE HAD NOT KNOWN OF THE TRIP. AFTER HE WAS SUMMONED TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY SOLE SAID IN A PRESS CONFERENCE THAT HE HAD NEVER DISCUSSED RALL'S TRIP WITH THE DEFENSE MINISTER.

6. AS CAPE TOWN POINTS OUT, SOLE IS SOMETHING OF AN CONFIDENTIAL

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EXPERT IN NUCLEAR AFFAIRS. HE REPORTEDLY MAINTAINS GOOD CONTACTS AMONG INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC SCIENTISTS.

7. SOLE, PERSONALLY, IS AN ATTRACTIVE AND OUTGOING INDIVIDUAL. IN HIS CONTACTS WITH THIS EMBASSY, HE HAS BEEN OPEN AND FRIENDLY; HE SEEMS WELL DISPOSED TOWARD THE U.S. BOTH HE AND HIS WIFE SHOULD BE VERY EFFECTIVE IN WASHINGTON.

8. SOLE SPEAKS ENGLISH, GERMAN AND AFRIKAANS. STOESSEL

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